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RBI EXTENDS DEADLINE TO RETURN ₹2,000 BANK NOTES TO OCTOBER 7
The Reserve Bank on Saturday extended the special drive to withdraw ₹2,000 bank notes from the system by another week, till October 7

96% OF THE NOTES HAVE ALREADY COME BACK
The central bank said ever since it announced the decision to withdraw ₹2,000 notes on May 19, ₹3.42 lakh crore of such notes have been received into the system. That works out to 96% of the ₹2,000 bank notes that were in circulation, the RBI said. The earlier deadline to return was Sept 30. The RBI stopped printing ₹2,000 notes in financial year 2019

₹2,000 NOTE TO REMAIN LEGAL TENDER
■ The RBI said the ₹2,000 currency notes shall continue to be legal tender even beyond October 7, but asked the public to deposit or exchange them without any further delay
■ From October 8, the notes can't be exchanged at banks. People have to visit one of the 19 offices of RBI to get it done, the statement said

₹20,000
PER TRANSACTION CAP DOES NOT APPLY FOR DEPOSITING IN RBI

Northeast monsoon likely to be normal: IMD

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE northeast monsoon that brings rain to five meteorological sub-divisions of south peninsular India between October-December is most likely to be normal, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Saturday.

The five states are Tamil Nadu, coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema, Kerala and south-interior Karnataka.

Normal monsoon would mean the region may receive 88% to 112% of the long-period average of 334.13 mm of rainfall. The northeasterly winds normally set in over the Bay of Bengal and south peninsular India, resulting in the onset of northeast monsoon rains in October.

Similar to the southwest monsoon that drenches India from June to September, the northeast monsoon is another major and permanent feature of the Indian subcontinent's climate system.

The northeast monsoon is significant for the government of Tamil Nadu where six districts of the state have been declared drought-affected.

According to agriculture department officials, blocks where crop damage is more than 33% due to rainfall shortage are declared as moderately agriculture drought-affected blocks.

There was insufficient rainfall in these areas from October 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022. The state government has sanctioned 181 crore to provide input subsidy relief assistance to benefit over 1.87 lakh farmers in six southern districts of the state.

According to the IMD, the southwest monsoon season has ended with India receiving "near normal" cumulative rainfall amid positive factors countering the effect of El Nino conditions.



EPIC RETURN AND HAPPY ENDING

(Left) India men's squash team won gold with a thrilling 2-1 win over Pakistan at the Asian Games; tennis stars Rohan Bopanna and Rituja Bhosale were the other big performers as they bagged mixed doubles gold | **PN** | P15

CANADA FALLOUT

Indian High Commissioner to UK heckled by K-gang

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

INDIA'S High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Vikram Doraiswami, was on Friday heckled by a small group of Khalistani radicals in Glasgow, Scotland, in what the Indian mission described as disgraceful.

The Sikh Gurudwara Committee in a Glasgow Gurdwara had organised a community reception for Doraiswami. A group of Khalistani activists from outside Scotland turned up, physically intimidated the local Sikh community and tried to attack Doraiswami in his car. Some others tried to film this flare up and share it on their social media accounts, saying 'he was not welcome'.

The person who heckled Doraiswami, went on camera to say that they needed to protect their religious rights and were upset with what was happening in Canada.

"This interaction was to discuss consular issues and community issues," read a statement by the Indian High Commission in London. The organisers, who included senior community leaders and a member of the Scottish Parliament, were threatened by the three. To prevent the situation from escalating, Doraiswami left.

"One of the extremists attempted to violently force open the HC's (Doraiswami's) car door," the statement said, adding the timely reaction of an organiser helped avoid a bigger incident. "The vast majority of British Sikhs are amazing people but this tiny aggressive minority are not representative of them," said Colin Bloom, former advisor to the British government.

Stopped visa service as diplomats felt unsafe: Govt

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THREATS to India's diplomats in Canada and the risk in their going to the consulate offices was one of the reasons why India had to stop visa services for Canada, said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

"We were left with no choice but to stop visa services for Canada. There was a campaign targeting our diplomats who felt unsafe travelling to the consulates. Thereby we had to stop. This was a law and order issue. Under the Vienna Convention our missions and diplomats had to be provided with a safe cover," said Jaishankar, during a presser in Washington.

Jaishankar, who had mentioned that Canada was discussed during his interaction with US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, said there was a difference of perception in the way the US and India looked at Canada.

"When Americans look at Canada they see something, we in India see something else. It is important to talk it out. The US is close to Canada and a good friend of ours. They have our point of view, we have taken a reasonable stance," he added.

India is a democracy and doesn't need to learn from other people about the freedom of speech, he said. "We don't think freedom of speech extends to incitement of violence. This is misuse of freedom," Jaishankar pointed out. India's point is that there is a climate of intimidation. Smoke bombs have been thrown at India's missions, posters threatening violence have been put up.

B'luru cops crack ₹854 cr pan-India online fraud, nab 6

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN probably the biggest cyber crime detection recorded in the country, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have detected online investment fraud totalling Rs 854 crore pertaining to a whopping 5,013 cases registered in 28 states and some union territories — all by a gang of nine, six of who have been arrested, while three are absconding.

All the 5,013 cases surfaced like a revelation while the CCB along with Bengaluru's Cyber Economic and Narcotics (CEN) police were investigating one case (case number 17/2023) registered in April in which the victim lost Rs 8.5 lakh. This was just one of the 17 cases filed in Bengaluru which were being investigated.

The cyber criminals cheated the victims by luring them with high rates of interest for the money they deposited with them. They contacted the victims on social media groups such as WhatsApp and Telegram, befriended them and cheated them after gaining their trust. The victims were asked to invest small amounts between Rs 1,000 and 10,000, and promised that they would earn between Rs 1,000 and Rs 5,000 daily in return. Falling for the lure, many invested Rs 1 lakh and upwards, some even

more than Rs 10 lakh, the police said. Neither the money was returned nor the interest paid as promised, the police added.

While investigating case number 17/2023 in Bengaluru, the police discovered that 84 mule bank accounts were being used for transactions in all 5,013 cases and about Rs 854 crore transacted so far as per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) portal. Mule bank accounts are run by third party individuals or groups as intermediaries to receive and transfer illegally obtained funds between various bank accounts within or outside the country.

The police have been investigating the case for the past three months, said B Dayananda, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner. The victims in the 17 cases registered in Bengaluru have been cheated of Rs 49 lakh.

Of the 5,013 cases, 487 were registered by Karnataka Police (including 17 in Bengaluru), 719 by Telangana Police, 642 cases by Gujarat Police, 505 by Uttar Pradesh Police, 472 by Tamil Nadu Police, 332 by Maharashtra Police. The remaining were registered by the police of other states, he said, adding that the city police will be in touch with their counterparts in other states, where cases have been registered, for further investigations. **P7**

Can't release water, K'taka tells CWMA, seeks permission for Mekedatu project

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka Government on Saturday filed a review petition before the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) expressing its inability to release water to Tamil Nadu and sought permission to implement the Mekedatu balancing reservoir project in the State. The CWMA had upheld the Cauvery Water Regulation Commission's direction to the State to release 3,000 cusecs of water daily till October 15.

Confirming that the State had filed the review petition, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah told reporters that the government will approach the Supreme Court after reviewing the situation. The government will take action as per the suggestions given by the former judges of the apex court and other legal experts. On Friday, Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar held a meeting with the former judges of the Supreme Court and legal experts on the dispute over sharing of Cauvery water.



In a significant move, in the

review petition, the government sought permission to the proposed Mekedatu project with a storage capacity of 67 tmcft. The government has been contending that this project will help Karnataka store water for drinking and power generation purposes. It will also help Tamil Nadu in times of distress.

Mekedatu is in Kanakapura taluk, around 100 km from Bengaluru. The proposed reservoir will be located around 50 km from the gauging station at Biligundlu in Tamil Nadu near the Karnataka border. TN believes that the reservoir, just across the border, is a hindrance to free flow of surplus Cauvery water from Karnataka.

Born before freedom, they will vote for first time

ELIAS KAISER @ Raipur

PARADOXICALLY, the right to vote in India isn't a fundamental right, though democracy is recognised as a basic feature of our Constitution. Here are three elders from Chhattisgarh — all born before Indian Independence — who have never voted. Call it the will of democracy that they will vote in this assembly election for the first time.

Shersingh Hidko (93), Shyamal (88), Rabika Masih (84) belong to the Bhanupratapur assembly constituency in Kanker district, about 200 km south of Raipur. The three recently registered as voters during the special summary revision of electoral rolls.

(BLO) Rajendra Kosma during a door-to-door survey found the three had never used their voting rights.

"We reached out to remote interior areas during summary revision and in the course of the survey were surprised to find Hidko, Shyamal, Masih had never voted either in assembly polls or parliamentary elections. We are encouraging people to actively participate in the assembly elections due later this year," said Pratik Jain, sub-divisional magistrate and electoral registration officer in Bhanupratapur.

They were initially hesitant to enroll as voters but when informed about their role as Indian citizens, they said they would vote in the upcoming



From left: Shyamal (88), Rabika Masih (84) and Shersingh Hidko (93)

Election-bound state

Chhattisgarh has 90 MLAs and the assembly election may be held in Nov as it was held in 2018. The Election Commission of India is yet to announce the date for polls.

polls. They have submitted their documents, including the Aadhaar card copies and photographs to the officer for inclusion of their names in the list of voters.

"Being a registered voter is exciting. I never knew the importance of citizenship," Hidko said. Shyamal and Masih still do not know how the polls lead to democratic governance. Chhattisgarh chief electoral officer Reena Babasaheb Kangale said the Election Commission wants to ensure that no voter is left behind.

"Efforts are also on to set up polling stations close to those habitats where villagers had to walk 10-15 km to vote. The move has motivated the locals, particularly across the Bastar region," she said.

For the first time in Chhattisgarh, senior citizens above 80 years of age and persons with disabilities (over 40%) will be allowed to vote from their homes through postal ballots, Kangale added.

Coming in Dec, PM's 2047 vision document

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will unveil a vision document for India in December this year, according to top government sources. The government's think tank Niti Aayog is believed to be working on it, which will draw a roadmap for resolving challenges India will face in the next few decades.

"The challenges of the old century (roti, kapda aur makaan) have been resolved. The focus will be on how to address the challenges of the future. The PM's Vision 2047 will outline strategies for the future," said an official. According to sources, old government schemes are

reaching saturation. "We have taken electricity to all villages, and all houses will have tap water connections by next year. With Ayushman Bharat, a large part of the population has been covered by health insurance. Now, it is the time for India to close the door of the last century and prepare for the problems of the next century," said the official.

The document may focus on digital infra, new ways of transportation and communication, green and renewable energy, and taking delivery of healthcare and education to a new level. One of the ideas is to provide people with access to expressways within 100 km from any part of the country.

Davanagere man held for issuing threats to writers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

CENTRAL Crime Branch (CCB) sleuths have arrested a 41-year-old printing press employee in Davanagere for sending threat letters to 15 Kannada writers and progressive thinkers.

The accused has been identified as Shivaji Rao Jadhav of Davanagere. It is said that he sent the threat letters because the writers wrote and issued public statements on topics that were against a particular religion. Jadhav, who studied up to eighth standard, is an office-bearer of an organisation in Davanagere. The sleuths have obtained Jadhav's custody for 13 days for further investigation. **P7**